

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 14, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 6, 2012

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 20

Introduced by Senator Evans

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Bonnie Lowenthal)

(Coauthors: Senators Alquist, Corbett, De León, Hancock, Kehoe, Liu, Negrete McLeod, Pavley, Wolk, and Yee)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alejo, Ammiano, Atkins, Block, Blumenfield, Bonilla, Brownley, Buchanan, Butler, Carter, Chesbro, Gordon, Hall, Hayashi, Hill, Huber, Huffman, Ma, Miller, Mitchell, Monning, Portantino, Torres, ~~and Wieckowski~~ *Wieckowski*, *Achadjian, Allen, Beall, Bill Berryhill, Bradford, Campos, Cedillo, Conway, Davis, Dickinson, Eng, Feuer, Fletcher, Fong, Furutani, Beth Gaines, Galgiani, Garrick, Gatto, Hagman, Harkey, Roger Hernández, Hueso, Jones, Lara, Mendoza, Morrell, Nestande, Olsen, Pan, Perea, John A. Pérez, Silva, Skinner, Smyth, Solorio, Swanson, Valadao, and Yamada*)

March 1, 2012

Senate Joint Resolution No. 20—Relative to violence against women.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 20, as amended, Evans. Violence Against Women Act.

This measure would call on the United States Congress to pass the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2011, Senate Bill No. 1925, authored by Senators Leahy and Crapo, and ensure the sustainability of vital programs designed to keep women and families safe from violence and abuse.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was
2 developed with the input of advocates from around the country
3 and from all walks of life, and addresses the real and most
4 important needs of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault,
5 dating violence, and stalking. VAWA is responsive, streamlined,
6 and constitutionally and fiscally sound, while providing strong
7 accountability measures and appropriate federal government
8 oversight; and

9 WHEREAS, VAWA represents the voices of women and their
10 families, and the voices of victims, survivors, and advocates; and

11 WHEREAS, VAWA was first enacted in 1994, and has been
12 the centerpiece of the federal government's efforts to stamp out
13 domestic and sexual violence. Critical programs authorized under
14 VAWA include support for victim services, transitional housing,
15 and legal assistance; and

16 WHEREAS, Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence,
17 and stalking, once considered private matters to be dealt with
18 behind closed doors, have been brought out of the darkness; and

19 WHEREAS, VAWA has been successful because it has had
20 consistently strong, bipartisan support for nearly two decades; and

21 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Reauthorization
22 Act of 2011 will provide a five-year reauthorization for VAWA
23 programs, and reduce authorized funding levels by more than \$144
24 million, or 19 percent, from the law's 2005 authorization; and

25 WHEREAS, While annual rates of domestic violence have
26 dropped more than 50 percent, domestic violence remains a serious
27 issue. Every day in the United States, three women are killed by
28 abusive husbands and partners. In California in 2010, there were
29 166,361 domestic violence calls, including more than 65,000 that
30 involved a weapon; and

31 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Reauthorization
32 Act of 2011 includes several updates and improvements to the
33 law, including the following:

34 (a) An emphasis on the need to effectively respond to sexual
35 assault crime by adding new purpose areas and a 25 percent
36 set-aside in the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and
37 Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program
38 (STOP Program) and the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and
39 Enforcement of Protection Orders Program.

1 (b) Improvements in tools to prevent domestic violence
2 homicides by training law enforcement, victim service providers,
3 and court personnel to identify and manage high-risk offenders
4 and connecting high-risk victims to crisis intervention services.

5 (c) Improvements in responses to the high rate of violence
6 against women in tribal communities by strengthening concurrent
7 tribal criminal jurisdiction over perpetrators who assault Indian
8 spouses and dating partners in Indian countries.

9 (d) Measures to strengthen housing protections for victims by
10 applying existing housing protections to nine additional federal
11 housing programs.

12 (e) Measures to promote accountability to ensure that federal
13 funds are used for their intended purposes.

14 (f) Consolidation of programs and reductions in authorization
15 levels to address fiscal concerns, and renewed focus on programs
16 that have been most successful.

17 (g) Technical corrections to update definitions throughout the
18 law to provide uniformity and continuity; and

19 WHEREAS, There is a need to maintain services for victims
20 and families at the local, state, and federal levels. Reauthorization
21 would allow existing programs to continue uninterrupted, and
22 would provide for the development of new initiatives to address
23 key areas of concern. These initiatives include the following:

24 (a) Addressing the high rates of domestic violence, dating
25 violence, and sexual assault among women 16 to 24 years of age,
26 inclusive, by combating tolerant youth attitudes toward violence.

27 (b) Improving the response to sexual assault with best practices,
28 training, and communication tools for law enforcement, as well
29 as health care and legal professionals.

30 (c) Preventing domestic violence homicides through enhanced
31 training for law enforcement, advocates, and others who interact
32 with those at risk. A growing number of experts agree that these
33 homicides are predictable, and therefore preventable, if we know
34 the warning signs; now, therefore, be it

35 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
36 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature calls on the United States
37 Congress to pass the Violence Against Women Reauthorization
38 Act of 2011, Senate Bill No. 1925, authored by Senators Leahy
39 and Crapo, and ensure the sustainability of vital programs designed

1 to keep women and families safe from violence and abuse; and be
2 it further
3 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
4 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
5 States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority
6 Leader of the Senate, each Senator and Representative from
7 California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author
8 for appropriate distribution.

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